



# Strategic Framework and Land Use

*“Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably will themselves not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die.”*

*-Daniel H. Burnham, American architect and urban planner 1846-1912*

## Introduction

According to state law, and by common practice in many California General Plans, the land use element is the central organizing element for the General Plan as a whole. All General Plan elements retain equal status, the land use element, however, provides guidance on policy development on all issues of citywide and regional significance. Moreover, it establishes the relationship between all of the elements and provides a consistent structure for the entire General Plan. The Strategic Framework and Land Use Element of the General Plan fulfills these objectives, and, most importantly, serves as the final arbiter on how the City of San Diego shall evolve and mature over the next twenty-plus years.

The Strategic Framework and Land Use Element (for ease of reference, this element will be referred to as the Land Use Element) includes links to policy development in the areas of: urban form, neighborhood character, historic preservation, public facilities, recreation, conservation, mobility, housing affordability, and economic prosperity. The element also houses the goals and detailed policy guidance regarding the topics of equitable development and economic justice, annexations, and planning for coastal resources. It, most importantly, emphasizes the role of each community plan as a critical component of the city’s General Plan. As one of the largest cities (both geographically and by population) in the state of California, San Diego relies upon all of its adopted community, specific, precise, subarea, and park plans to provide more detailed and parcel specific land use, design, transportation, and implementation proposals. The Land Use Element establishes that structure to respect the diversity of each community and allows the city to meet its responsibilities under state planning law regarding the distribution of land use, density and intensity. This Element also includes policy direction to govern the preparation and amendment of each community plan and General Plan.

## Citywide Framework

The General Plan offers policy direction in the areas of: urban form, neighborhood character, historic preservation, public facilities, conservation, mobility, and housing supply and affordability. It is a comprehensive approach to guiding the future development of the entire city. The following discussion provides an overview of each policy area. Refined and more detailed policies related to these topics are lo-



cated in the related element: *Mobility, Urban Design, Economic Prosperity, Public Facilities, Services and Safety, Housing, Recreation, Conservation, and Noise.*

## **Urban Form**

San Diego is one of the few major metropolitan areas built upon and around a canyon system. The city's urban form is loosely based upon a naturally connected system of open space, characterized by valleys, canyons and mesas. These natural features also define the boundaries and gateways into the city's distinct neighborhoods. As San Diego grows, its urban form must increasingly respect the existing natural template, provide stronger linkages between communities, and create diverse village centers.

## **Neighborhood Quality**

San Diegans value the distinctive character, safety and security, diversity, and sense of community in the city's many neighborhoods. Many of the city's older communities are loved for their architectural style, mix of uses, tree-lined streets and distinctive shopping districts. Others are drawn to new suburban locations because of the excellent public facilities and new home choices. The General Plan provides the policy basis to preserve the best qualities of its neighborhoods, improve elements that do not function well, and provide for the needs of future generations. Where village development occurs, it will contain various mixes of commercial, employment, and housing uses. Village Centers will also include public gathering spaces, civic or educational uses, walkable, tree-lined streets, and opportunities for arts and culture. Historic resources will be addressed in a comprehensive manner throughout the city and, where present, will be incorporated into many of the village centers. Parks and recreational resources will also be well integrated into the community to increase access and opportunities to recreate for all users.

## **Public Facilities and Services**

The provision of adequate infrastructure and public facilities is a major General Plan goal. Public facilities and services like schools, parks, and fire and life safety must keep pace with population growth and development. To achieve progress in remedying existing shortfalls and to provide high quality public facilities and services in the future, new growth must have a more compact urban form, include more and different joint-use opportunities, new sources of revenue must be secured, and the communities must have a role in prioritizing and tailoring facilities and services to meet their diverse needs.

## **Conservation and the Environment**

San Diego's beauty and character is, in large part, credited to its unmatched natural resources. San Diego's mountains, beaches, bays, canyons, and other natural landforms define the city. Some of the most unique, and unfortunately threatened and endangered, plants and animals in the nation are concentrated in this region. Our future quality of life hinges upon the protection of these natural resources to safeguard San Diego's beauty and biodiversity, and to ensure an adequate supply of resources such as energy and water for the future.



The City of San Diego is committed to protecting and restoring natural resources, preventing harm to the environment and human health, and promoting a sustainable future that meets short-term objectives without compromising San Diego's long-term needs. Environmental quality is critical to maintaining the city's quality of life and ensuring long-term economic prosperity. The city's commitment to conservation and the environment shall guide future decision making, policy development and implementation programs.

## **Mobility**

The General Plan calls for a convenient, efficient, and attractive multi-modal transportation system that encourages trips to be made by pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. This system should improve mobility for San Diegans by providing faster, competitive, even preferred, alternatives to the automobile for many trips in the region.

To realize this vision, transportation and land use planning must be closely linked. This includes retrofitting and redeveloping portions of existing neighborhoods and roadways and designing new streets and centers to fully integrate land use, circulation, and urban design. The goal is to maximize the ability of people to move about comfortably and efficiently by foot, bicycle and transit, and to reduce automobile dependence. Thoughtful land use planning may also reduce the need for vehicular travel, because goods and services would be conveniently located near homes and jobs.

For San Diegans to enjoy freedom of mobility in the future, dramatic improvements to the transit system and focused improvements to streets and highways must occur. Additionally, future road improvements to enhance the connectivity of the transportation network must be reviewed against the goals of protecting neighborhood character and environmental resources.

Villages will include a variety of uses and services to meet many of the daily needs of the people living and working within them, however, they are not expected to be self-sufficient enclaves. San Diego's more dense neighborhoods, urban centers, and corridors will be linked to each other and to the region through high quality, rapid transit services designed in accordance with the Transit First link strategy. The strategy also seeks to improve walkability and bicycle-friendliness within the villages and the city as a whole.

## **Airports**

Aviation plays an essential role in supporting the growth and vitality of the metropolitan region and contributes to the mobility of society. Aviation activities will increase as the region's population continues to grow and as high tech industries evolve. Depending upon location, air transportation can affect where and how land uses are designated and can result in potential noise and safety issues. Current noise sensitive land uses affected by aircraft noise have developed over a long period of



time, and as a result, they are not intended to be discontinued, but they can incorporate acoustical measures to limit the effects of aircraft noise. Aviation will continue to play an essential and increasingly important role in the region's transportation system and economy; a role that the city will help ensure by working with the Airport Authority which serves as the Airport Land Use Commission during amendments or updates to the General Plan, community plans, and development regulations.

### **Housing Affordability**

Increased housing opportunities, in terms of amount of land, location, density, type, size, and cost, are needed to accommodate future population growth, changing demographics, and to enable the workforce to live near employment centers. The city is responsible for providing a sufficient range of housing opportunities by facilitating the maintenance and development of overall diversity of housing types and costs. The provision of affordable housing also assists the City of San Diego in meeting social equity and economic prosperity goals.

### **Economic Prosperity**

Economic prosperity policies seek to achieve a rising standard of living for all San Diegans. A major objective of the economic prosperity element is to establish a diverse economy to maintain the economic stability of the city.

Continuous changes in the structure of the economy result in significant physical impacts to the city and social impacts to its residents. The appropriate designation of land for economic development activities and housing will support continued economic growth in the city. The leadership role that the city takes in the provision of adequate regional public facilities also benefits the local economy. Other policies regarding employment growth and accessibility to education and other resources can assist in alleviating the existing disparities among San Diego residents.

The essence of the Land Use Element is the City of Villages strategy, directing where, when, and how growth and development shall occur to ensure the preservation and enhancement of the city's neighborhoods and valuable natural resources and amenities. The method of accomplishing this is the community planning program, the vehicle to tailor the City of Villages strategy and other general plan goals and policies to each community planning area.

Successful implementation of the General Plan relies upon the translation of the Citywide Framework and these long-term goals and policies into everyday decisions made by city staff and the decision makers.



## A. City of Villages Strategy

### Goal

- Mixed use villages located throughout the city and connected by high quality transit

### Discussion

The City of Villages strategy draws upon the strengths of San Diego's natural environment, neighborhoods, commercial centers, institutions, and employment centers. The strategy focuses on the long-term economic, environmental, and social health of the city and its many communities. It is a strategy designed to allow each neighborhood to consciously determine where and how new growth should occur, and requires that new public facilities be in place as growth occurs. The strategy seeks to target growth into village areas, centers as identified by the community, but it assumes no particular rate of growth.

### Identification of Villages

The term "village" is defined as the mixed-use heart of a community where residential, commercial, employment, and civic uses are all present and integrated. No two villages will be alike. They will be unique to the community in which they are located. Villages will be pedestrian friendly and characterized by inviting streets, and include public spaces for community events. These spaces will vary from village to village and may consist of: public parks or plazas, community meeting spaces, outdoor gathering spaces for residents and visitors, passive or active open space areas that contain desirable landscape and streetscape design amenities, or attractive outdoor dining and market activities. Villages will offer a variety of housing types and rents/prices. As the region further implements the Regional Transit Vision (see the Mobility Element), villages will be connected citywide by excellent transit service integrated into a regional transit system and will be required to incorporate an attractive, efficient, and accessible pedestrian circulation system. The mix of land use should also include public facilities such as schools, libraries, and police services to meet community needs. As described, the community will define the village; basic parameters related to recommended land use types and distribution are included in the descriptions below.

### Village Categories

Implementation of the strategy relies upon the identification of sites available for village development. The following categories of villages and development areas should be used as a framework for implementation of the City of Villages concept and policy recommendations. The categories can include both new target growth areas, as well as areas already designated for growth in community plans that



could redevelop with a village design. ***Village designations (located in Table LU-2 Community Plan Land Use Designations)*** and the precise boundaries, specific mix of uses, specific density and intensity ranges, and the amount and definition of required public or civic space, or semi-public space within proposed village areas will be determined through the community plan update and amendment process. This can be accomplished through the adoption of detailed design and development guidance in either the Community Identification Element of each community plan or the Community Plan Implementation Overlay Zone (CPIOZ).

**Regional Center (Downtown)** - The Centre City Community Plan area has a unique role to play in the 21st century development of the San Diego region. Downtown has remained the administrative and legal center of San Diego County and it has recently re-emerged as the most important cultural and entertainment center in the region. Development of the Gaslamp Quarter, San Diego Convention Center, and Horton Plaza has resulted in downtown becoming an increasingly important destination for visitors. Downtown offers the most convenient and extensive transit connections and has emerged as one of the most exciting pedestrian environments in the region.

**Subregional Employment Districts** - A Subregional Employment District is a major employment and/or commercial district within the region containing corporate or multiple-use office, industrial, and retail uses with some adjacent multi-family residential uses. Existing Subregional Districts include the Mission Valley/Morena/Grantville and University/Sorrento Mesa areas. Emerging districts include the Otay Mesa, Midway/Pacific Highway, and Kearny Mesa areas.

**Urban Village Centers** - Urban Village Centers, higher density/intensity growth areas located in subregional employment districts, will have a cluster of more intensive employment, residential, regional and subregional commercial uses to maximize walkability and support transit. The Urban Village Center will contain public gathering spaces and civic uses. University Towne Center and the higher density development surrounding it are an example of an existing Urban Village Center.

**Neighborhood Village Centers** - Neighborhood Village Centers should be located in almost every community. They are neighborhood-oriented areas with local commercial, office, and multi-family residential buildings, including some buildings with office or residential space above commercial space. Neighborhood Village Centers will contain public gathering spaces and/or civic uses. Uses will be integrated to the maximum extent possible in order to encourage a pedestrian-oriented design and encourage transit ridership. Neighborhood Village Centers range in size from approximately three acres in the most urbanized portions of the city to more than one hundred acres in vacant or redevelopable areas. The Uptown District in Hillcrest, at about 45 dwelling units per acre on the residential portion of the site, and downtown La Jolla are examples of existing Neighborhood Village Centers. The Community Village land use designation can also be applied to those sites that will contain higher densities and intensities to serve a larger geographic area than the immediate neighborhood.





**Transit Corridors** - The city contains a significant number of commercial corridors in urbanized communities that offer reuse potential and provide important linkages between village centers. Some of these corridors are “Main Streets” in that they are lively and vital, pedestrian-friendly, and home to a rich variety of small businesses and restaurants. However, in some cases these corridors are unsightly commercial strip malls struggling to compete with more upscale centers. In addition to providing valuable new housing, increased residential densities provide a built-in population base to support the local street level businesses. A high level of transit service and a variety of streetscape improvements will also characterize transit corridors.

### **Village Locational Criteria**

Sites potentially suitable for village type development were identified during the Strategic Framework Plan drafting process based upon a preliminary analysis of the criteria listed below. For reference, these areas are shown on the City of Villages Transit/Land Use Connections Map (see fold-out map). The Transit/Land Use Connections Map is a graphic illustration of the City of Villages strategy; it is not a land use map. Its role is to depict how the strategy can direct growth into focused areas, serve as a tool to coordinate land use and transit planning (see the Mobility Element), and to preserve open space. The sites identified on this map will require additional study to determine if they are indeed appropriate for and can accommodate mixed-use development and village design. Many community plans already identify sites for mixed-use and provide extensive design and development policy guidance for development of those sites. This map will be updated on a regular basis as community plan updates and amendments confirm, modify, add, or remove village sites.

### **Policies**

- SF-A.1. Consolidate the position of Centre City as the premier urban village in San Diego and regional hub. Maintain and enhance its role as the major business center in the region and encourage its continued development as a major urban residential center with the largest concentration of high density multi-family housing in the region.
- SF-A.2. Encourage further intensification of employment uses throughout Subregional Employment Districts. Where appropriate, the collocation of medium to high density residential uses with employment uses may also occur, consistent with policies in the Economic Prosperity Element.



- SF-A.3. Urban Village Centers vary in size and could support medium to high density residential uses. These densities will apply to that portion of the site designated for residential or mixed-use.
- SF-A.4. Neighborhood Village Centers.
- a. Designate Neighborhood Village Centers in every community planning area consistent with the locational criteria in this section.
  - b. Establish residential density and commercial intensity ranges based upon center size, location, surrounding community character, and availability of public facilities, particularly transit, with most villages centers providing a low-medium to medium-high density range in a variety of building types.
  - c. Apply low-medium to medium-high density to portions of the site developed as residential or mixed-use.
  - c. Locate, where possible, Neighborhood Village Centers and/or Community Village Centers in older, underutilized shopping centers and strip malls.
- SF-A.5. Revitalize transit corridors through the application of plan designations and zoning that permit a higher intensity of mixed-use development that includes some combination of the following with density ranges of medium to high density for residential uses:
- residential above commercial development
  - employment uses
  - commercial uses
  - higher density residential development
- SF-A.6. Village locational criteria.
- a. Seek input from community planning groups as a key factor in determining village locations.

***Transit-Oriented Development Design Guidelines***

*Calthorpe Associates for the City of San Diego, 1992*

*These guidelines comprise a long-range strategy to address San Diego's growing auto dependence, dispersed land use patterns, and traffic congestion. Transit-Oriented Developments (TOD) are mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods which are developed around a transit stop. Neighborhood-based TODs (similar to villages per the Strategic Framework Element) would, at a minimum, include moderate density residences along with convenience retail and public spaces. Larger, or more urban TODs/villages, could include higher density residences, significant civic/public spaces, and a full range of commercial and employment uses. Specific guidance on desired land uses and character of the TOD would come from the recommendations of the appropriate community plan.*

*The TOD Guidelines address issues related to site selection, land use patterns, street configuration, design details, and implementation incentives. Some of the specific TOD guidelines and terms have been modified, but the overall concepts set forth in the TOD Guidelines have been incorporated into the City of Villages strategy.*





- b. Identify and designate villages based upon the following:
  - Existing village-like and/or mixed-use areas that could benefit from revitalization.
  - Sites well served by existing or planned transit
  - Town or community centers in newer communities that could be enhanced or expanded.
  - Sites that are not designated as open space or single-family residential in the community plan.
  - Vacant or underutilized land which could be made available in the next 20 years for other types of uses.
  - Sites without significant topographic, environmental, or other physical constraints.
  - Sites where village type development will complement the existing community fabric or help to achieve desired community character.
  - Sites adjacent to existing or planned public facilities.

## B. Equitable Development

### Goal

- Community and neighborhood specific strategies and implementation measures to achieve equitable development

### Discussion

Implementation of the City of Villages strategy carries a risk of gentrification. The term gentrification has various definitions. The definition used here is “the process by which higher income households displace lower income residents of a neighborhood, changing the essential character and flavor of that neighborhood.”<sup>1</sup>

Gentrification is a process that is neither wholly good nor bad, and the negative aspects of gentrification can be minimized if equitable development is achieved. Equitable development is defined as “the creation and maintenance of economically and socially diverse communities that are stable over the long term, through means that generate a minimum of transition costs that fall unfairly on lower income residents.”<sup>2</sup> If carefully framed, gentrification can help meet the goal of equitable development by creating a greater income mix in a neighborhood and providing new economic opportunities. By improving the housing stock and job market in older urban neighborhoods, gentrification can also help fight urban sprawl by helping older neighborhoods successfully compete with the suburbs for investment dollars. Both public and private sector partners must act early in the revitalization process to promote equitable development and to ease or eliminate the adverse consequences of gentrification.

1. Maureen Kennedy and Paul Leonard, *Dealing With Neighborhood Change: A Primer on Gentrification and Policy Changes*. (The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, April 2001) p.5.  
2. Kennedy and Leonard, p.4.



The City of San Diego can take a leadership role in defining and implementing some of these strategies. Others require action by the private sector, other government agencies and community-based partners. In fact, many of the most successful programs have been initiated and implemented by the residents of affected areas. Neighborhood-specific action plans should expand upon and further define these general strategies based on the needs of individual neighborhoods, available resources and willing partners. These action plans will be adopted as a part of village master plans or other long-range plans as appropriate.

Balanced commercial development in the City of San Diego's communities and quality of life assets such as recreational opportunities, mobility, unique neighborhoods and an active public life are important components vital to the future of San Diego. The Economic Prosperity Element addresses equitable development goals, however, the assessment of the fiscal and economic impacts of major development projects, and balanced commercial development are addressed specifically in this section.

As San Diego's population grows and developable land decreases, many communities have experienced changes in the mix of commercial land uses because of rising rents. There are actions that can be taken to address the shortages of more affordable commercial spaces available to new entrepreneurs and growing businesses. In addition, there may be some communities that find traditional community-serving businesses are being displaced and the establishment of new local businesses is difficult. The community plan update process will provide an opportunity to identify what type of business growth is desirable in each community through a process of public discussion. Although they may share some features, commercial stabilization strategies are unique to each community. These will be established as community specific policies in each community plan.

In some instances, public activities such as redevelopment efforts or public facility expansion or improvement can result in a physical displacement of a business. Often, business relocation is to a site outside the city. Care should be taken to avoid unwarranted displacement.

## **Policies**

- SF-B.1. Land Use and Community Planning and Community Development.
- a. Develop village plans with the involvement of a broad range of neighborhood, business, and planning groups.
  - b. Invest strategically in public infrastructure and offer development incentives that are consistent with the neighborhood's vision.
  - c. Build affordable housing to retain a diverse income mix in neighborhoods.
  - d. Reduce overall market-wide housing pressures by increasing the supply of market-rate housing.



- e. Recognize the important role that schools play in neighborhood life and look for opportunities to form closer partnerships among local schools, residents, neighborhood groups, and the city with the goal of improving public education.
  - f. Ensure that neighborhood development and redevelopment addresses the needs of older people, particularly those disadvantaged by age, disability, or poverty.
- SF-B.2. Balanced Commercial Development.
- a. Maintain adequate investment in regional infrastructure over time to ensure its longevity.
  - b. Support communities' efforts to identify the desired business growth model for their area and implement a strategy to achieve that goal.
  - c. Preserve and expand the existing business base with an emphasis on local ownership of businesses and/or assets.
  - d. Ensure that new development serves the retail, employment and service needs of local residents.
  - e. Encourage local employment within new developments and provide entrepreneurial opportunities for local residents.
  - f. Assist existing business owners in accessing programs that can provide financial assistance and business consulting services. Such programs include Small Business Administration loans, façade renovation and redevelopment assisted forgivable loans.
  - g. Consider, in redevelopment and community plan update and amendment processes, where businesses displaced by commercial gentrification can be relocated.

## C. Environmental Justice

### Goals

- A just and equitable society
- Equitable distribution of public facilities, infrastructure and services
- Improved mobility options and accessibility in every community
- Safe and healthy communities

### Discussion

Environmental justice is defined in federal and state law as “the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures and income levels with respect to the development, adoptions, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.”



Environmental justice is achieved when everyone, regardless of race, culture, gender, disabilities, or income, enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to and meaningful participation in the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work. It is more than an important goal in land use and transportation planning; it is a prerequisite in obtaining federal transportation funds and other grant monies.

Additionally, the State of California has an expectation that local governments will adopt policies to ensure the provision of the equitable distribution of new public facilities and services, and to expand opportunities for transit-oriented development, among other considerations. The City of Villages strategy and emphasis on transit system improvements, transit-oriented development, and the citywide prioritization and provision of public facilities in underserved neighborhoods is consistent with environmental justice goals. The following policies are designed to address environmental justice through broadening public input, determining the benefits and burdens of transportation projects, and designing and locating public facilities that are accessible to all.

## **Policies**

- SF-C.1. Ensure environmental justice in the planning process through meaningful public involvement by providing:
  - a. Assurance that potentially affected community residents have opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their environment and health and that the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision making process.
  - b. Increased public outreach to all segments of the community that is holistic and informative.
- SF-C.2. Balance individual needs and wants with the public good.
- SF-C.3. Implement development policies that equitably protect public health, safety and welfare, and that incorporate the needs of those who are disenfranchised in the process.
- SF-C.4. Prioritize and allocate citywide resources to provide public facilities and services to communities in need.
- SF-C.5. Guarantee meaningful participation for all community residents in the siting and design of public facilities.
- SF-C.6. Provide equal access to public facilities and infrastructure for all community residents.



- SF-C.7. Treat all people fairly with respect to the development, adoption, implementation and enforcement of transportation policies, plans, and projects.
- SF-C.8. Expand public outreach on transportation policy, projects, and operations in order to get input from ethnic minorities, low income residents, persons, with disabilities, the elderly and other under-represented communities. Ensure that people who are directly impacted by a proposed action are given opportunities to provide input.
- SF-C.9. Design transportation projects so that the resulting benefits and potential burdens are equitable. Some of the benefits of transportation programs include improved accessibility, faster trips, more mobility choices, and reduced congestion. Common negative consequences include health impacts of air pollution, noise, crash-related injuries and fatalities, displacement of residents, and division of communities.
- SF-C.10. Improve mobility options and accessibility for the non-driving elderly, disabled, low income and other members of the population.
  - a. Work with San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) to implement small neighborhood shuttles and local connectors in addition to other services called for in the ***Regional Transit Vision***.
  - b. Increase the supply of housing units that are in close physical proximity to transit and to everyday goods and services such as grocery stores, medical offices, post offices, and drug stores.
- SF-C.11. Implement the City of Villages concept for mixed-use, transit-oriented development as a way to minimize the need to drive by increasing opportunities for individuals to live near where they work, offering a convenient mix of local goods and services, and providing access to high quality transit services.
- SF-C.12. Ensure environmental protection that does not unfairly burden or omit any one geographic or socioeconomic sector of the city.
- SF-C.13. Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and pollution experienced by historically disadvantaged communities.
- SF-C.14. Create appropriate buffer zones to help alleviate or minimize potential hazards of certain types of land uses.
- SF-C.15. Plan for the equal distribution of potentially hazardous and/or undesirable, yet necessary, land uses, public facilities and services, and businesses to avoid over concentration in any one geographic area, community, or neighborhood.



- SF-C.16. Ensure the provision of noise abatement and control policies that do not disenfranchise, or provide special treatment of, any particular group, location of concern, or economic status.

## D. Planning For Coastal Resources

### Goal

- Certification of community plans as the City of San Diego's Local Coastal Program
- Preservation and enhancement of coastal resources

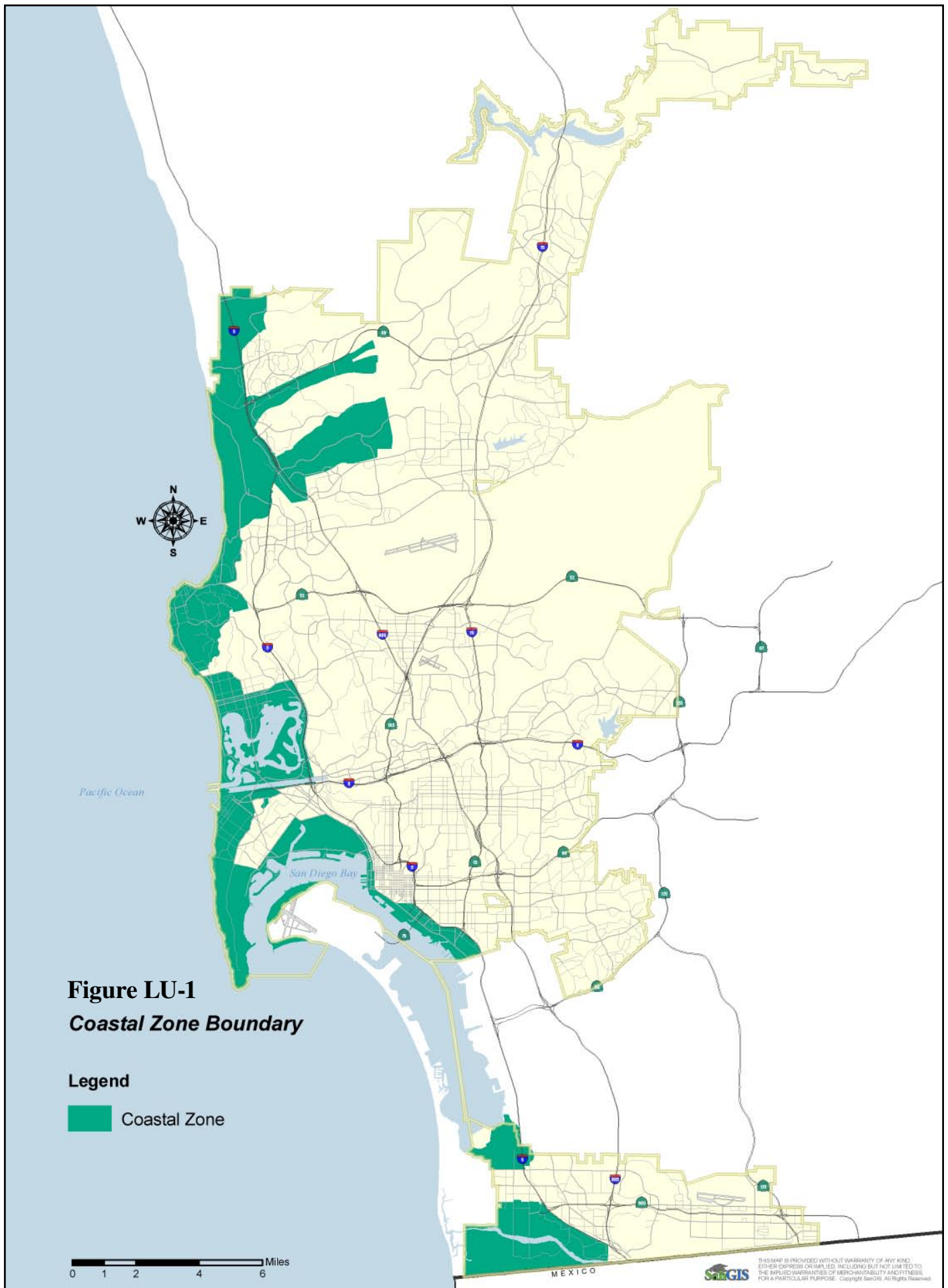
### Discussion

The California Legislature adopted the California Coastal Act in 1976 to “protect, maintain, and, where feasible, enhance and restore the overall quality of the coastal zone environment and its natural and artificial resources (Public Resources Code Section 30001.5) for the benefit of current and future residents and visitors.” The law applies to property within the coastal zone as delineated on a set of maps adopted by the Legislature. The law establishes the Coastal Commission to regulate development in portions of the Coastal Zone and to work in partnership with local government, specifically 15 coastal counties and 58 cities, of which the City of San Diego is one, to manage the conservation and development of coastal resources through comprehensive planning and regulatory programs, and Local Coastal Programs (LCPs).

The City of San Diego has chosen to approach the preparation of an LCP consistent with its approach to overall land use planning within the city. Coastal land use policies are integrated into each of the community plans, as they are updated, that govern the land uses within the coastal zone. This is true of community plan areas located either wholly or partially within the coastal zone (see Figure LU-1 Coastal Zone Boundary).

Further, the land use plan and implementing zones adopted as part of each community plan update meet the Coastal Act's requirement that coastal land use provisions be sufficiently detailed to indicate the kind, location, and intensity of land uses. Coastal protection and enhancement strategies vary within each of the 18 community and other land use plan documents (see Table LU-1 Community Planning Areas within the Coastal Zone), but all are prepared consistent with a standardized framework of issues modeled upon the Coastal Act policies.





**Figure LU-1**  
**Coastal Zone Boundary**

**Legend**

 Coastal Zone

0 1 2 4 6 Miles

MEXICO

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### ***Local Coastal Programs***

*An LCP consists of a land use plan, zoning ordinances, zoning maps, and any other programs necessary to implement the Coastal Act. Additionally, the LCP must include a public access component. The Coastal Act allows for local jurisdictions, in consultation with the Coastal Commission and the public, to determine the precise content and format of each LCP.*

*The Coastal Act policies, established in the California Coastal Plan and adopted by the Coastal Commission in 1975, are the standards employed by the Coastal Commission in its coastal development permit decisions, and review of LCPs. Local government agencies, such as the City of San Diego prepare and adopt LCPs and submit them to the Coastal Commission for certification prior to becoming effective. When certifying an LCP, the Coastal Commission must determine that the jurisdiction's proposed policies and regulations are adequate to carry out the intent of the policies in the Coastal Act.*

*The policies require:*

- *Protection and expansion of public access to the shoreline and recreational opportunities and resources, including commercial visitor facilities*
- *Protection, enhancement and restoration of environmentally sensitive habitats, including intertidal and nearshore waters, wetlands, bays and estuaries, riparian habitat, certain wood and grasslands, streams, lakes and habitat for rare or endangered plants or animals*
- *Protection of productive agricultural lands, commercial fisheries and archaeological resources*
- *Protection of the scenic beauty of coastal landscapes and seascapes*
- *The establishment, to the extent possible, of urban-rural boundaries and directing new housing and other development into areas with adequate services to avoid wasteful urban sprawl and leapfrog development*
- *Provision for the expansion, in an environmentally sound manner, of existing industrial ports and electricity generating power plants, as well as for the siting of coastal-dependent industrial uses*
- *Protection against loss of life and property from coastal hazards*



**Table LU-1 Community Planning Areas Within The Coastal Zone**

Barrio Logan/Harbor 101	Ocean Beach
Carmel Valley	Otay Mesa/Nestor
Del Mar Mesa	Pacific Beach
La Jolla	Pacific Highlands Ranch
Midway/Pacific Highway Corridor	Peninsula
Mira Mesa	Torrey Hills
Mission Bay Park	Tijuana River Valley
Mission Beach	Torrey Pines
North City Future Urbanizing Area -San Dieguito River Valley -North City Local Coastal Program	University

The City of San Diego has jurisdiction to issue Coastal Development Permits for areas of the Coastal Zone where the Coastal Commission has certified the LCP. This constitutes a majority of the area within the Coastal Zone.

Areas of deferred certification also occupy the Coastal Zone. In these areas, the Coastal Commission has not yet certified the LCP, and therefore, retains coastal development permit authority. Areas of deferred certification can be a part of a land use plan that was certified, but permit authority for these areas has not transferred to the city. Areas of deferred certification may become part of the certified LCP in the future.

There are also areas of original jurisdiction that are not a part of the LCP, and, further, are not anticipated to be certified. In this instance, permit authority will remain with the Coastal Commission.

## Policies

- SF-D.1. Incorporate community specific policies into Coastal Zone community plans during community plan update and/or amendments to address Coastal Commission direction on the following:
- Biologic and geologic stability
  - Circulation, parking, and beach impact area
  - Public access
  - Recreational opportunities
  - Visitor-serving priority
  - Visual resources
- SF-D.2. Ensure consistency of all coastal planning policies with the regional, city-wide, and other community specific planning policies included in each General Plan Element.



## E. Annexations

### Goals

- Identification of prospective annexation areas to limit urban sprawl, avoid duplication of urban services in an efficient manner, and preserve open space
- Annexation of county islands within the City of San Diego boundaries

### Discussion

The City of San Diego plays a leading role in regional planning. This role includes working with other jurisdictions and agencies in refining the city's boundaries. The expansion of city boundaries can help discourage urban sprawl by providing organized and planned growth, the efficient delivery of urban services, such as police, fire, water and sanitation, and the preservation of open space. By discouraging sprawl, the city can limit the misuse of land resources and promote a more cost-efficient delivery of urban services. Both the state and county support the expansion of cities to provide urban services, rather than the expansion of special districts.

Under the authority of the state, the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO) regulates, through approval or denial, any boundary changes proposed by a city. Although LAFCO does not have the power to initiate boundary changes on its own, LAFCO coordinates the orderly development of a community through reconciling differences between city and county plans, so the most efficient urban service arrangements are created for the benefit of area residents and property owners.

A "Sphere of Influence" which is used to determine the most logical and efficient future boundaries for cities, is the physical boundary and service area that a city is expected to serve. In 1985, LAFCO determined the City of San Diego's Sphere of Influence to be co-terminus with its jurisdictional boundaries.

Areas shown in the Figure LU-2, Prospective Annexation Areas Map, include both islands of unincorporated land within the city, and unincorporated areas that share common geographic features and are bordered by the same natural boundaries as the contiguous city area. Land within the areas designated on the map can be reviewed for the possibility of annexation upon the initiative of either the landowner or the city.

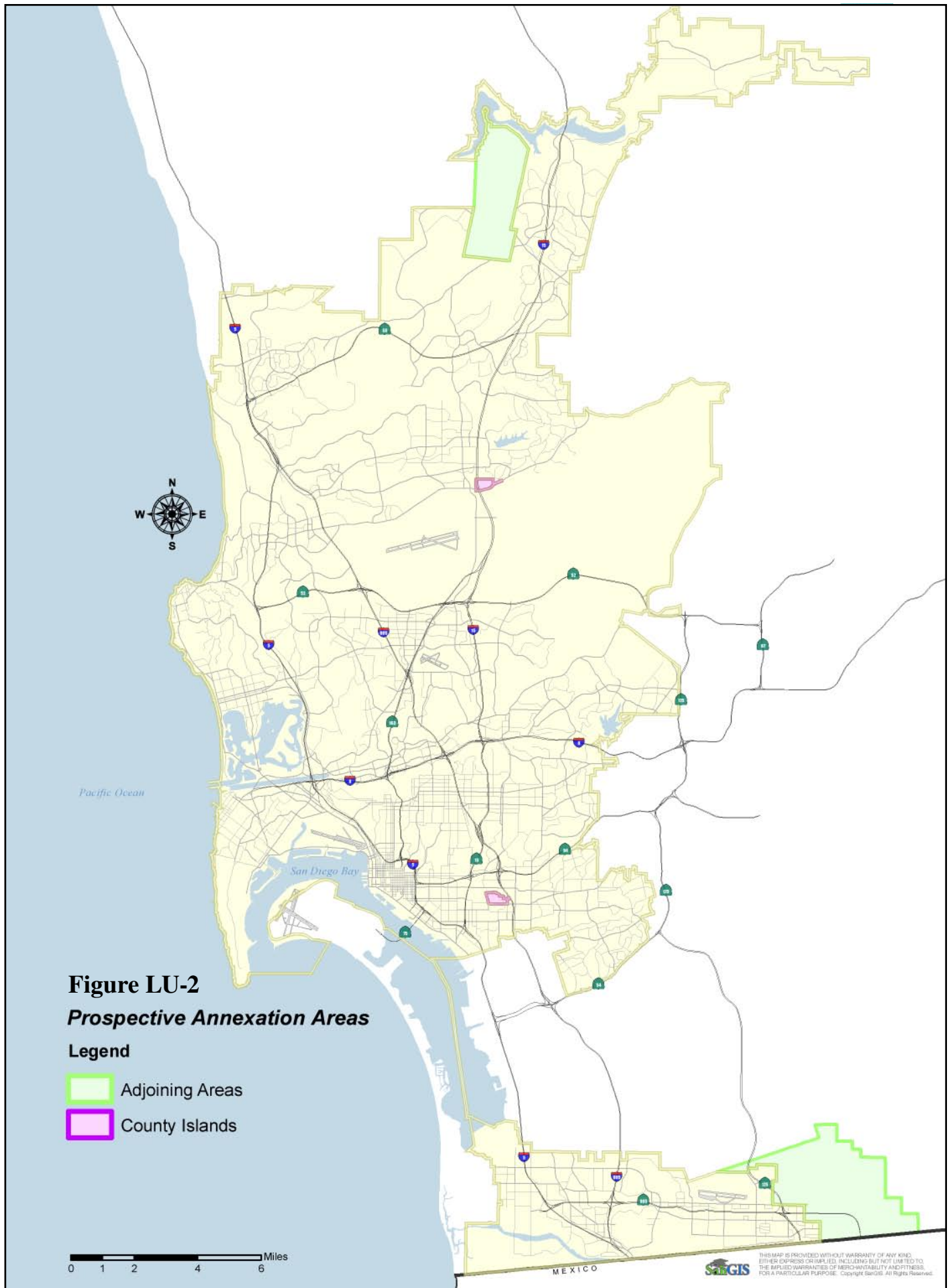
LAFCO will determine if the proposed annexation requires an amendment to the Sphere of Influence, or if a Sphere of Influence study is needed prior to an amendment. In either case, LAFCO will also use the above-mentioned factors as part of its decision making process.



## Policies

- SF-E.1. Identify prospective annexation areas for long-range planning purposes to:
- Avoid duplication of services with special districts
  - Promote a more cost-efficient delivery of urban services to both existing areas that already have urban services and future development areas that require urban service extensions from contiguous city areas
  - Promote orderly growth and development and preserve open space, as necessary, on its periphery
- SF-E.2. The city will use the following factors in determining whether the city should submit an annexation application to LAFCO:
- The present and planned land uses for the proposed annexation
  - The present and future need for urban services and facilities
  - The fiscal impact of the proposed annexation to the city
  - Whether the proposal represents an orderly and logical extension of city boundaries
  - The ability of the city to provide urban level services
  - Whether the proposal would induce residential growth
  - Whether the proposal would provide provisions for affordable housing
  - Whether the proposal would provide provisions for open space
  - The effect of the annexation to any relevant social or economic communities of interest
  - The level of support on the part of affected property owners and area residents
- SF-E.3. Upon annexation, areas will be included in the appropriate community planning area and future development shall implement the policies and recommendations of the General Plan and applicable community plan.
- SF-E.4. Pursue annexation of the county islands listed below based upon a review of the preceding factors, and the fact that the City of San Diego has provided efficient delivery of urban services, roadways and other major public facilities to these areas for many years
- The Davis Ranch, an approximately 77-acre property, designated for industrial use, located adjacent to Interstate 15 within the Scripps Miramar Ranch Community Planning area
  - The Mount Hope Cemetery, an approximately 100-acre property, designated as a public cemetery, located within the Southeastern Community Planning Area









## F. The Community Planning Program

### Goals

- Community plans clearly linked to the General Plan
- Community plans structurally consistent yet diverse in their presentation and refinement of citywide policies to address community and neighborhood goals
- Plan amendments approved to better implement the General Plan and community plan goals and policies
- Zoning adopted concurrent with community plan updates and amendments

### Discussion

State law defines a community plan as part of the General Plan and recognizes their utility in larger city and county jurisdictions. The Land Use Element is one of the seven mandatory elements as defined by California state law, and as such, it must designate the general distribution and general location of land uses throughout the city. The Element must also provide a range of recommended density and/or intensity ranges for each category of land use. In a larger and more diverse jurisdiction such as San Diego, the Land Use Element serves as a foundation upon which community plans are developed. The City of San Diego designates its community plans as a chapter of the Land Use Element and relies upon them to provide the more detailed designation and distribution of land uses at the smaller geographic level of community or neighborhood plan area. The community plans are an essential and completing component of the Land Use Element and allows the city to satisfy state law.

Land use designations are organized into two tiers. Table LU-2, General Plan Land Use Designations, includes all of the land use designations applied throughout the city grouped into seven generalized designations according to basic characteristics: Parks and Open Space, Agriculture, Residential, Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services, Industrial Employment, Institutional and Public and Semi-Public Facilities, and Multiple Use. The General Plan Land Use Designations Table establishes the linkage between General Plan land use categories as depicted in the General Plan Land Use Map (see fold-out), and the more specific community plan land use categories. Link to Table LU-2 Community Plan Land Use Designations Table.



**Table LU – 2 General Plan Land Use Designations Table**

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designations	Existing Community Plan Designations		
Parks and Open Space	Open Space Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active/Passive Park</li> <li>• Active Use Parks</li> <li>• Amenity Open Space</li> <li>• City-owned Open Space</li> <li>• Community Open Space</li> <li>• Community Park</li> <li>• Dedicated Park Lands</li> <li>• Equestrian /Recreation</li> <li>• Existing Commercial Recreation</li> <li>• Golf Course</li> <li>• Historic Park</li> <li>• MHPA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mini Park</li> <li>• Neighborhood/Community Park</li> <li>• Neighborhood Park</li> <li>• Park</li> <li>• Park Institutional Park/Open Space</li> <li>• Parks and Pool</li> <li>• Private Commercial Recreation</li> <li>• Private Recreation</li> <li>• Public Park</li> <li>• Public Recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recreational</li> <li>• Recreation Center</li> <li>• Recreation Commercial</li> <li>• Regional Park</li> <li>• School/Park</li> <li>• School Playground</li> <li>• School Recreation</li> <li>• Skate Park</li> <li>• Sport Complex</li> <li>• Sports Field</li> <li>• State Park</li> <li>• Village Green</li> <li>• Zoological Park</li> </ul>
Agriculture	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Community Open Space/ Agriculture</li> </ul>	
Residential	Residential - Very Low Residential – Low Residential - Low Medium Residential - Medium Residential - Medium High Residential - High Residential - Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cluster</li> <li>• Core Residential</li> <li>• Detached Residential</li> <li>• Duplex</li> <li>• Estate Residential</li> <li>• Exclusively Residential</li> <li>• Fraternity Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garden Low</li> <li>• High Residential</li> <li>• Higher Density Attached</li> <li>• Low Medium Residential</li> <li>• Low Residential</li> <li>• Lower Density Attached</li> <li>• Medium High Residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medium Residential</li> <li>• Mobile Home</li> <li>• Mobile Home Park</li> <li>• Moderate Income</li> <li>• Navy Housing</li> <li>• Very High Residential</li> </ul>



**The City of San Diego General Plan**  
*Strategic Framework/Land Use Element*

General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designations	Existing Community Plan Designations		
Commercial Employment, Retail, and Services	Neighborhood Village Neighborhood Commercial Community Village Community Commercial Regional Village Regional Commercial Office Commercial Visitor Commercial Heavy Commercial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Border Commercial</li> <li>• Business Commercial</li> <li>• Commercial</li> <li>• Commercial Development</li> <li>• Commercial Fishing/Marine Related</li> <li>• Commercial Industrial</li> <li>• Commercial Limited</li> <li>• Commercial Recreation</li> <li>• Community Commercial</li> <li>• Community Shopping</li> <li>• Core Commercial</li> <li>• General Commercial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Commercial w/Residential</li> <li>• General Commercial w/Limited Light Manufacturing</li> <li>• Hotel/Office</li> <li>• Hotel/Residential</li> <li>• Medical Offices – Hospital Related</li> <li>• Navy Commercial</li> <li>• Neighborhood Shopping</li> <li>• Office Commercial</li> <li>• Professional Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional Commercial</li> <li>• Resort Commercial</li> <li>• Resort Recreation</li> <li>• Specialized Commercial</li> <li>• Specialty Commercial</li> <li>• Student Oriented Commercial</li> <li>• Support Commercial</li> <li>• Tourist Commercial</li> <li>• Town Center</li> <li>• Transportation Commercial</li> <li>• Visitor Commercial</li> </ul>
Industrial Employment	Business Park Business Park - Residential Allowed Scientific Research Light Industrial Heavy Industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business/Industrial Park</li> <li>• Employment Center</li> <li>• Employment Center/Transit Center</li> <li>• Exclusively Industrial</li> <li>• Extractive Industry</li> <li>• General Industrial</li> <li>• Industrial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial and Business Park</li> <li>• Industrial Business Park</li> <li>• Industrial: Natural Resources</li> <li>• Industrial Park</li> <li>• Industrial Parking</li> <li>• Light Industry</li> <li>• Light Industry Commercial Use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Light Manufacturing</li> <li>• Military Related Industry</li> <li>• Restricted Industrial</li> <li>• Sand and Gravel Open Space</li> <li>• Scientific Research</li> <li>• Storage</li> </ul>



General Plan Land Use	Recommended Community Plan Designations	Existing Community Plan Designations
Institutional and Public and Semi-Public Facilities	Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Airport</li> <li>• Airport Overlay</li> <li>• Cemetery</li> <li>• Civic</li> <li>• Community Centers</li> <li>• Community Facilities</li> <li>• County Facility</li> <li>• Cultural Center</li> <li>• Education/Institutional</li> <li>• Government Service</li> <li>• Hospital</li> <li>• Institutional/Utilities</li> <li>• Library</li> <li>• Military</li> <li>• Mission and School</li> <li>• Mixed Public Use</li> <li>• Multi-use School Site</li> <li>• Neighborhood Facility</li> <li>• Parking/Parks</li> <li>• Parking/School</li> <li>• Police Station</li> <li>• Post Office</li> <li>• Public Facilities</li> <li>• Public/Quasi Public Use</li> <li>• Schools (elementary, Junior, High)</li> <li>• Transit Center</li> <li>• Transportation Use</li> <li>• University Campus</li> <li>• Utilities</li> </ul>
Multiple Use	No recommended designation; see community plan for use recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial</li> <li>• Commercial/Mixed Use</li> <li>• Commercial/PDO</li> <li>• Commercial/Residential</li> <li>• Commercial/Residential/Industrial</li> <li>• Core/Retail</li> <li>• Gaslamp Quarter</li> <li>• Hotel/Office</li> <li>• Hotel/Residential</li> <li>• Institutional</li> <li>• Light Industry/Commercial</li> <li>• Local Mixed Use</li> <li>• Marina</li> <li>• Mixed Use</li> <li>• Mixed Use Core</li> <li>• Multiple Use</li> <li>• Office</li> <li>• Recreation Visitor/Marine</li> <li>• Residential/Office</li> <li>• Very High Commercial</li> <li>• Village</li> <li>• Visitor Commercial</li> </ul>



This General Plan Land Use Map depicts generalized land uses, as previously explained, within the City of San Diego and identifies the planned street system, freeways, expressways, and arterial, major and collector streets needed to serve vehicular transportation demand resulting from the buildout of the city in accordance with this General Plan. The map is based upon a composite of the more detailed land use maps adopted for each of the community, specific, precise, and park plan areas, and subareas consistent with the General Plan. The General Plan Land Use Map allows the reader to understand the distribution of land use and its connection to the transportation network. It is not a replacement or substitution for community or other adopted land use plans where parcel specific land uses are designated.

The City San Diego has more than fifty planning areas, as illustrated in Figure LU-3, Planning Areas Map. The community planning program has a long and diverse history; the earliest community plans were adopted in the 1960s. Each document is a unique reflection of the issues and trends facing the community and corresponding strategies to implement community goals.

Such a structure recognizes the diversity of each plan area while allowing the General Plan to focus upon citywide development and preservation issues. All of the city's adopted land use plans, however, must be consistent with the overarching goals, objectives, and policies of the General Plan. Internal consistency is required; no one Element or plan may take precedence over the other. It is also the city's goal to rely upon community plans over the use of specific and precise plans as community specific policy documents.

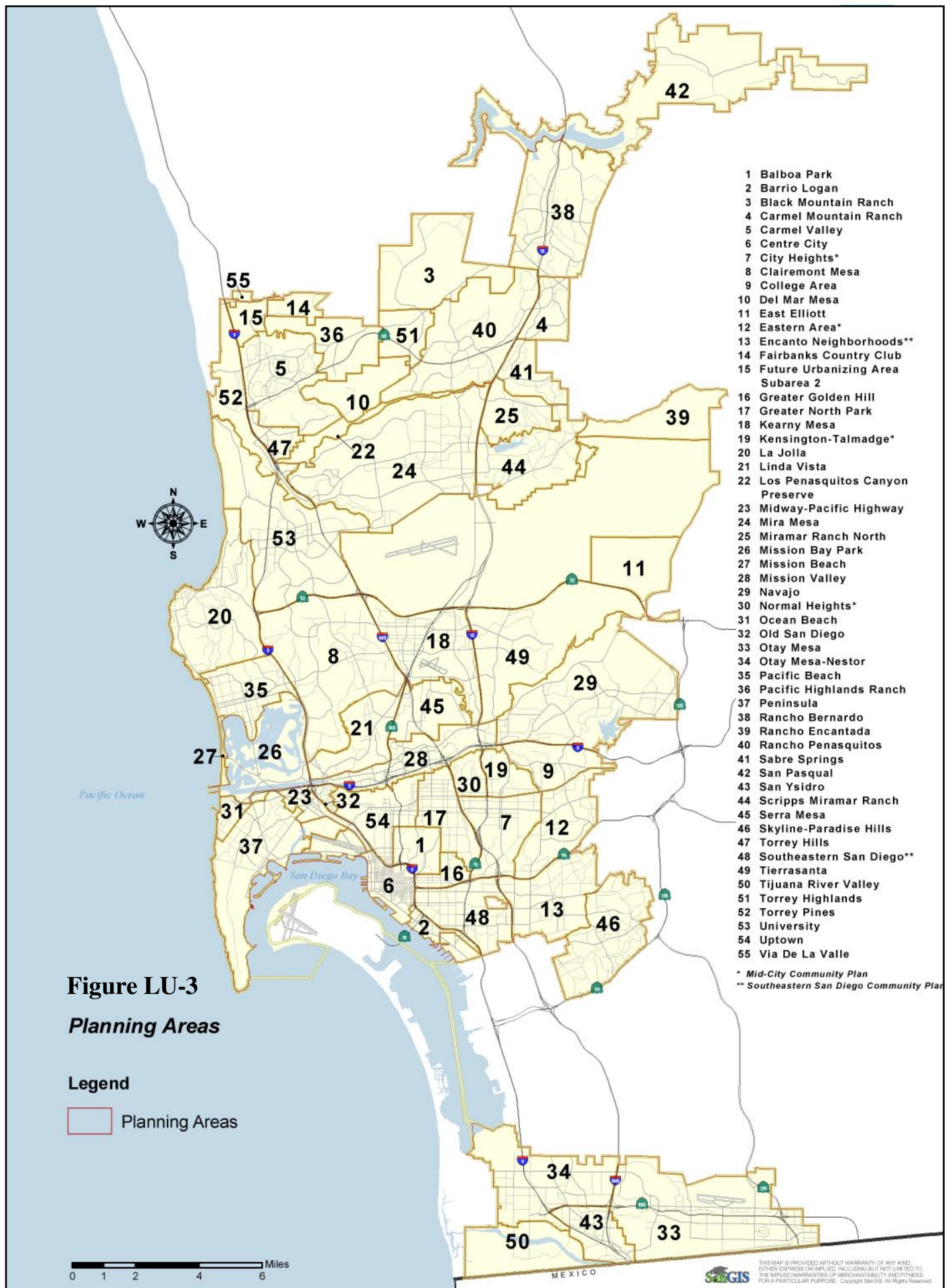
### **Community Plan Preparation**

As previously noted, community and other area plans are oriented toward specific geographic areas of the city, defining locally the more general citywide policies as established in the General Plan with more specificity than is possible at the citywide level. This structure is necessary because of the city's diverse geography, development patterns, diverse cultural and ethnic communities, and other variations which require that policies developed to implement citywide goals be tailored to meet community and neighborhood needs.

#### ***Guidelines for Community Plan Preparation***

*A separate companion manual to the General Plan includes a detailed procedure to implement the community plan preparation policies. It includes direction on how to satisfy the policy objectives listed in this section and provides a table of contents, sample policies, relevant government code sections regarding planning and outreach, community plan designations and definitions, recommended timelines, and general direction on policy development to accomplish the task of developing the community plan as a community specific, implementation ready document.*









## Community Plan Land Use Categories

Standardized land use categories have been created to implement General Plan goals and the City of Villages strategy. Table LU-3 Community Plan Land Use Designations includes the designation, descriptions of each of the designations, definitions, special considerations and density and intensity ranges. The table is a significant tool for use during the plan update and/or amendment process to provide specific direction regarding the location of desired land uses. Standardized categories were developed to ensure that in the future, as community plans are updated and amended, land use categories will remain consistent between each community plan. Uses can be tailored, however, through specific recommendations in plan text and/or footnotes on a land use map to denote emphasis or to limit uses.



**Table LU-3**  
**Community Plan Land Use Designations**

Recommended Community Plan Designation	Additional	Definitions	Allowed Intensity/ Density [Building intensity range (du/ac or FAR)] <sup>1</sup>
<b>Parks and Open Space</b>			
Open Space		Applies to land or water areas generally free from development or developed with very low intensity uses that respect natural environmental characteristics. Open Space is generally non-urban in character and may have utility for: park and recreation purposes, primarily passive; conservation of land, water, or other natural resources; or historic or scenic purposes.	N/A
Parks		Provides for areas designated for passive and/or active recreational uses. It will allow for facilities and services to meet the recreational needs of the community as defined by the community plan.	N/A
<b>Agriculture</b>			
Agriculture		Provides for areas that are rural in character and very low density or areas where agricultural uses are predominate. This designation is intended to accommodate a wide range of agriculture and agriculture-related uses such as: dairies; horticulture nurseries and greenhouses; raising and harvesting of crops; raising, maintaining and keeping of animals; separately regulated agriculture uses; and single dwelling units when applicable.	(Low density residential estates) 1 du/10 ac - 1 du/ac
<b>Residential</b>			
Residential - Very Low		Provides for single-family housing within the lowest density range.	0 - 4 du/ac
Residential - Low		Provides for both single-family and multi-family housing within a low density range.	5 - 9 du/ac
Residential - Low Medium		Provides for both single-family and multi-family housing within a low medium density range.	10 - 14 du/ac
Residential - Medium		Provides for both single and multi-family housing within a medium density range.	15 - 29 du/ac
Residential - Medium High		Provides for multi-family housing within a medium high density range.	30 - 44 du/ac
Residential - High		Provides for multi-family housing within a high density range.	45 - 74 du/ac
Residential - Very High		Provides for multi-family housing within the highest density range.	75+ du/ac



**The City of San Diego General Plan**  
*Strategic Framework/Land Use Element*

Recommended Community Plan Designation	Additional	Definitions	Allowed Intensity/Density [Building intensity range (du/ac or FAR)] <sup>1</sup>
<b>Commercial<sup>1,3</sup></b>			
Neighborhood Village	Residential Required	Provides housing in a mixed use setting and convenience shopping, civic uses, and services serving an approximate three mile radius.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 15 to 29 du/ac <sup>1</sup>
Neighborhood Commercial	Residential Allowed	Provides local convenience shopping, civic uses, and services serving an approximate three mile radius. May also provide housing in a mixed use setting.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 15 to 29 du/ac
Neighborhood Commercial	Residential Prohibited	Provides local convenience shopping, civic uses, and services serving an approximate three mile radius.	.25 to 2.0 FAR
Community Village	Residential Required	Provides housing in a mixed use setting and serves the commercial needs of the community at large, including the industrial and business areas. Integration of commercial and residential use is emphasized; civic uses are an important component. Housing, retail, professional/administrative offices, commercial recreation facilities, service businesses, and similar types of uses are allowed.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 30 to 75 du/ac
Community Commercial	Residential Allowed	Provides for shopping areas with retail, service, civic, and office uses for the community at large within three to six miles. It can also be applied to Transit Corridors where multi-family residential uses could be added to enhance the viability of existing automobile-oriented commercial uses.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 30 to 75 du/ac
	Residential Prohibited	Provides for shopping areas with retail, service, civic, and office uses for the community at large within three to six miles.	.25 to 2.0 FAR
Urban Village	Residential Required	Serves the region with many types of uses, including housing, in a high intensity, mixed-use setting. Integration of commercial and residential use is emphasized; larger, civic uses and facilities are a significant component. Uses include housing, business/professional office, commercial service, and retail.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 30 to 110 du/ac
Regional Commercial	Residential Allowed	Serves the region, from five to twenty five plus miles, with a wide variety of uses, including commercial service, civic, retail, office, and limited industrial uses. Housing may be provided in a mixed use setting.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 30 to 75 du/ac
	Residential Prohibited	Serves the region, from five to twenty five plus miles, with a wide variety of uses, including commercial service, civic, retail, office, and limited industrial uses.	.25 to 2.0 FAR



Recommended Community Plan Designation	Additional	Definitions	Allowed Intensity/ Density [Building intensity range (du/ac or FAR)] <sup>1</sup>
Office Commercial	Residential Allowed	Provides for office employment uses with limited, complementary retail uses while allowing medium to high density residential development in a mixed use setting.	.25 to 1.5 FAR 15 to 44 du/ac
Visitor Commercial	Residential Allowed	Provides for the accommodation, dining, and recreational uses for both tourists and the local population. This designation is intended for land located near employment centers and areas with recreational resources or other visitor attractions. Residential uses are also allowed in a mixed use setting.	.25 to 2.0 FAR 30 to 75 du/ac
Heavy Commercial	Residential Prohibited	Provides for retail sales, commercial services, office uses, and heavier commercial uses such as wholesale, distribution, storage and vehicular sales and service. This designation is appropriate for transportation corridors where the previous community plan may have allowed for both industrial and commercial uses.	.25 to 1.0 FAR
<b>Industrial<sup>2</sup></b>			
Business Park	Office Use Permitted	Provides for areas characterized by office development and also permits research, product development and light manufacturing with enhanced design features. It is appropriate to apply in limited portions of communities primarily characterized by office development with some light industrial uses.	.25 to 3.0 FAR
Business Park-Residential Permitted	Office Use Permitted	Applies in areas where employment and residential uses are located on the same premises. Permitted employment uses include those listed in the Business Park designation.	.25 to 3.0 FAR
Scientific Research	Office Use Prohibited	Provides for activities limited to scientific research, product development and testing, engineering and any other basic research functions leading to new product development with only limited manufacturing. Office uses, including corporate headquarters, are not permitted, except as accessory to the primary use or as direct support for scientific research uses.	.25 to 3.0 FAR
Light Industrial	Office Use Prohibited	Allows a wider variety of industrial uses than the Business Park designation and Scientific Research designation by permitting a full range of manufacturing activities and adding secondary industrial uses such as warehouse storage and transportation terminals. Only limited office or commercial uses should be permitted which are accessory to the primary industrial use. Heavy industrial uses such as extractive and primary processing industries that have nuisance or hazardous effects are excluded.	.25 to 3.0 FAR



**The City of San Diego General Plan**  
*Strategic Framework/Land Use Element*

Recommended Community Plan Designation	Additional	Definitions	Allowed Intensity/ Density [Building intensity range (du/ac or FAR)] <sup>1</sup>
Heavy Industrial	Office Use Prohibited	Provides for industrial uses emphasizing base-sector manufacturing, wholesale and distribution, extractive, and primary processing uses with nuisance or hazardous characteristics. For reasons of health, safety, environmental effects, or welfare these uses should be segregated from other uses. The presence of non-industrial uses, particularly office, should be significantly limited in these areas to preserve land that is appropriate for large-scale industrial users.	.25 to 3.0 FAR
<b>Institutional</b>			
Institutional		Provides a designation for uses that are identified as public or semi-public facilities in the community plan and which offer public and semi-public services to the community. Uses may include but are not limited to: airports, community colleges, university campuses, landfills, communication and utilities, transit centers, water sanitation plants, schools, libraries, police and fire facilities, cemeteries, post offices, hospitals, park and ride lots, government offices and civic centers.	N/A
<sup>1</sup> Density and intensity ranges will be further refined in each community plan within the range established in this table. <sup>2</sup> Consult the Economic Prosperity Element for policies related to the commercial and industrial land use designations. <sup>3</sup> Commercial land categories may be combined to meet community objectives.			



## Policy

- SF-F.1. Community Plan Format and Content.
- a. The General Plan and the community plans, together, will establish the policy framework to guide development throughout the city.
  - b. Provide a fair and predictable land use planning process.
  - c. Incorporate precise plan and specific plan policies and recommendations into community plan updates.
  - d. Prepare community plans to address all aspects of development, as specific to the community, including:
    - distribution and arrangement of land uses (both public and private)
    - mobility planning policies
    - location, prioritization, and the provision of public facilities
    - urban design guidelines
    - preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources
    - coastal resource policies (when within the Coastal Zone)
  - e. Draft and adopt community plans within a reasonable timeline to ensure that the city's land use policies are maintained as up to date and relevant and that implementation can be achieved.
  - f. Include all community residents, property owners, business owners and civic groups who wish to participate in both planning and implementing the community vision.
  - g. Ensure that community plans are long-range documents to guide the development and evolution of a community plan area over a long-term planning horizon. Plan policies must be based upon existing conditions but anticipate and plan for what the community hopes to be; community building is a lengthy and ongoing process.
  - h. Avoid duplication of General Plan goals and policies: build upon and/or refine citywide and regional goals and policies to reflect the neighborhood level to ensure that public and private development proposals reflect community goals.
  - i. Establish each community plan as a separate and complete document, yet easily recognized and linked as a component of the General Plan and a companion to other community plans.
  - j. Ensure that every community plan is consistent with other community plans and the General Plan as a valuable component of the city's "land constitution."
  - k. Draft each community plan as visionary yet achievable – a community plan may not be a "wish list" or a vague view of the future but rather must provide a promise that can be fulfilled.





- SF-F.2. Apply the recommended land use categories at the time of a plan update and/or amendment to allow the community to clearly designate where (and where not) particular land uses are desirable.

## G. Consistency

### Zoning Consistency

Despite the fact that state law exempts charter cities from the consistency requirement, it is the City of San Diego's practice to apply zoning that is consistent with community plan land use designations to ensure their implementation. Zoning is one of the primary plan implementation measures. As the California General Plan Guidelines 2003 state, "The success of a general plan, and in particular the land use element, rests in part upon the effectiveness of a consistent zoning ordinance in translating the long-term objectives and policies contained in the plan into everyday decisions."

It is the City of San Diego's policy that the Municipal Code contain adequate regulations, in the Land Development Code chapters, to ensure that the policies and recommendations of adopted land use plans (the community, specific, and precise plans, as well as the General Plan) are clearly applied to new development. The adopted land use plans provide guidance and set the framework for the implementing regulations found in the Land Development Code.

Zoning will be reviewed and changed as appropriate, especially at the time of community plan update or amendment, to assure that revised land use designations or newly-applicable policies and recommendations can be implemented through zoning and development regulations.

### Internal Consistency

The Government Code states that "the General Plan and elements and parts thereof comprise an integrated, internally consistent and compatible statement of policies for the adopting agency." This concept means that no policy conflicts can exist, either textual or diagrammatic, between the components of a General Plan. Different policies must be balanced and reconciled within the plan.

### Policies

- SF-G.1. Zoning Consistency.  
Ensure that the regulations of the Land Development Code address the following:
- Implementation of the policy recommendations of the General Plan.
  - Implementation of the land use designations of the community plans.



- c. Implementation of other goals and policies of the community plans.
  - d. Implementation of community-specific policies and recommendations through tailored zoning and development regulations.
- SF-G.2. Assess project consistency for public and private projects based upon conformance with General/community plan specified:
- a. Land use
  - b. Density/intensity
  - c. Design guidelines
  - d. Other General Plan and community plan policies especially related to open space preservation, community identity, mobility, and the timing, phasing, and provision of public facilities.
- SF-G.3. Internal Consistency.
- Ensure that review for internal consistencies includes the following:
- a. All elements of the General Plan have equal legal status; one Element cannot take precedence.
  - b. All elements, whether optional or mandatory, must be consistent with one another.
  - c. There must be consistency within each Element.
  - d. All goals and policies established in a community plan must be consistent with the overall General Plan.
  - e. The text, maps, and diagrams within a General Plan must be in agreement.

## H. Plan Amendment Process

### Discussion

The General Plan is a comprehensive and long range document; it is adopted to express the community's vision for the future and to guide how that vision is implemented on a daily basis. Although the vision is absolute, the means of its achievement are more subject to changing demographics, technologies, economics, and federal and state laws. As such, the General Plan must be a flexible document, allowing for changes that ultimately assist in enhancing and implementing the vision. Too many, too frequent or inappropriate changes, however, can diminish the expressed vision, and sidetrack its implementation.

*A separate companion document will be adopted as part of the Land Development Manual to implement the policies regarding amendments to the General Plan as found in this section. It will include guidance to staff and applicants on when an amendment is required, Technical Amendments, Single Discipline Review, relevant government code statutes, issues to be addressed through processing, and recommended timelines.*



It is necessary, therefore, to establish a fair, orderly, and well defined process to govern how these changes, amendments, occur. This process will ensure that all proposed amendments are reviewed for conformance with the vision, values and General Plan goals.

## **Initiation**

The City of San Diego is unique among jurisdictions in that the process to amend the General Plan requires either Planning Commission or City Council initiation, or approval, so that the plan amendment process may actually proceed. While it is the first point to be considered by a decision maker (the Planning Commission or City Council), it is a limited decision. It is neither an approval nor denial of the plan amendment and accompanying development proposal (some plan amendments are presented without a development proposal). The decision maker should not discuss the details of the development proposal, but rather focus upon the more fundamental question of whether the proposed change to the General Plan is worthy of further analysis based upon compliance with the Initiation Criteria.

Although applicants have the right to submit amendment requests to the city, not all merit study and consideration by city staff and the decision makers. The initiation process allows for the city to deny an application for amendment if it is clearly inconsistent with the major goals and policies of the General Plan, as expressed in the Initiation Criteria. Most importantly, the initiation process allows for early public knowledge and involvement in the process as a whole. Additionally, the Planning Commission has the opportunity to direct city staff to ensure that specific factors are evaluated and addressed during the processing of the proposed plan amendment.

## **Public Hearing Process**

Upon completion of the draft plan amendment and appropriate environmental document, the plan amendment may proceed to public hearing, subject to the public hearing procedures specified in Chapter 12, Article 2, Division 1, Sections 122.0105-122.0107 of the Land Development Code.

## **Policies**

### **SF-H.1. General Plan Amendment Requirement.**

Require a General Plan and/or community plan amendment for the following:

- a. Proposals that involve a change in community plan adopted land use or density/intensity range
- b. Proposals that involve a change in the adopted community plan development phasing schedule
- c. Proposals that involve a change in plan policies, maps, and diagrams



- SF-H.2. Require an amendment to the public facilities financing plan concurrently with an amendment to the General Plan and/or community plan when a proposal results in a demand for public facilities beyond projections in the community plan and public facilities financing plan.
- SF-H.3. Evaluate all plan amendment requests through the plan amendment initiation process to determine whether it is appropriate to process and present the proposal to the Planning Commission and City Council for consideration.
- SF-H.4. Technical Amendment Initiation.  
Initiate a technical amendment without the need for a public Planning Commission hearing when the Planning Department determines, through a single discipline Preliminary Review, that the proposal satisfies one or more of the following categories:
- a. The amendment is appropriate due to a map or text error and/or omission made when the land use plan was adopted or during subsequent amendments
  - b. The amendment is appropriate to address other technical corrections discovered during implementation
  - c. The amendment is necessary to ensure the public health, safety, or welfare
  - d. The amendment is proposed to identify the location and design of a public facility already identified in the adopted Capital Improvements Program (CIP)
  - e. The amendment is required to comply with changes in state or federal law or applicable findings of a court of law
  - f. The amendment is appropriate to revise language concerned solely with a process or procedural matter or an appendix to update information
  - g. Require that an amendment which proposes to change major policy direction of the General and/or community plan not be processed as a technical amendment.
  - h. Subject technical amendments to the processing procedures identified in General Plan Amendments (see sidebar in this section), adopted as part of the Land Development Manual.
- SF-H.6. Criteria for Initiation of Amendments to the General Plan.
- a. Require that General Plan and/or community plan amendment initiations (except those determined to be technical) be decided by the Planning Commission with right of appeal to the City Council by the applicant.
  - b. The City Council may also initiate by directing the preparation of a plan amendment.



- c. Require that the Planning Department present and make a recommendation of approval or denial to the Planning Commission based upon compliance with all of the following criteria:
  - The amendment request appears to be consistent with the goals and policies of the General and Community Plan and any community plan specific amendment criteria; and
  - The proposed amendment provides additional benefit to the community as compared to the existing land use designation, density/intensity range, plan policy or site design; and
  - Public facilities appear to be available to serve the proposed increase in density/intensity, or their provision will be addressed as a component of the amendment preparation and public hearing process.
- d. Acknowledge that initiation of a plan amendment in no way confers adoption, that neither staff nor the Planning Commission is committed to recommend in favor or denial of the proposed amendment, that the City Council is not committed to adopt or deny the proposed amendment.

SF-H.7. Plan Amendment Processing

- a. Require that upon initiation, city staff work with the applicant and community to address specific issues identified through the initiation process and those that may be established in adopted land use plan as community specific amendment evaluation factors.
- b. Address the following standard plan amendment issues prior to the Planning Commission decision at a public hearing:
  - Level and diversity of community support
  - Appropriate size and boundary for the amendment site
  - Provision of additional benefit to the community
  - Implementation of major General Plan and community plan goals, especially as related to the vision, values and City of Villages Strategy
  - Provision of public facilities

SF-H.8. The Planning Commission and the City Council will consider the factors as described in SF-N.29 in making a determination to approve or deny the proposed amendment during the public hearings.



## I. Limitations on Growth

### Goal

- The provision of citywide resources to address existing deficiencies
- Public facilities provided by new growth commensurate with the level of impact

### Discussion

The city must carefully balance how to allow and encourage growth in focused areas with the absolute requirement for the timely provision of public facilities. New development is a critical component in any plan to revitalize older, urbanized neighborhoods, but it cannot legally bear the burden of addressing existing facility deficiencies.

New growth, however, even as it assumes its fair share of the provision of public facilities, has the potential to diminish the city's ability to assure that adequate levels of service standards are maintained concurrently with new development. It is incumbent upon the city to evaluate and approve all new growth based upon its implementation of the General Plan and community plan. It is also incumbent upon the city, therefore, to employ other resources to ensure that existing deficiencies are corrected as new growth occurs.

### Guidelines for Future Development

The Guidelines for Future Development, the previous growth management program adopted in 1979 with the General Plan, divided the city geographically into three tiers or phases of growth: Urbanized, Planned Urbanizing, and Future Urbanizing areas. The General Plan encouraged intensive and varied development in the Urbanized area, a portion of the city consisting of the older, established neighborhoods and the downtown core. Development in the Planned Urbanizing area's newly developing communities, primarily along the I-5 and I-15 corridors could also occur, but General Plan and Council Policies required developers to provide all necessary public facilities through either a Facilities Benefit Assessment (FBA) or other financing mechanisms. The Future Urbanizing area (FUA) located, primarily, at or adjacent to city boundaries was largely vacant and zoned for agricultural use. It was the city's urban reserve. The General Plan discouraged urban and suburban levels of development in the FUA unless and until the other tiers were sufficiently built out, and then only after a detailed planning process to determine where and if growth should occur.

### Proposition A – The Managed Growth Initiative

In 1985, the electorate adopted Proposition A, an initiative amending the Progress Guide and General Plan to require approval of a majority vote of the people for shifting of land from the Future Urbanizing to the Planned Urbanizing Area phase



of growth or development. The ballot measure further provided that the “provision restricting development in the Future Urbanizing Area shall not be amended except by majority vote of the people except for amendments which are neutral or make the designation more restrictive in terms of permitting development.” As required by the ballot measure, the full text is included herein:

Section 1. “No property shall be changed from the ‘future urbanizing’ land use designation in the Progress Guide and General Plan to any other land use designation and the provisions restricting development in the future urbanizing area shall not be amended except by majority vote of the people voting on the change or amendment at a Citywide election thereon.”

Section 2. Definitions. “For purposes of this initiative measure, the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:”

- (a) “Progress Guide and General Plan shall mean the Progress Guide and General Plan of the City of San Diego, including text and maps, as the same existed on August 1, 1984.”
- (b) “Change in Designation” or change from ‘Future Urbanizing’ shall mean the removal of any area of land from the future urbanizing designation.
- (c) “Amendment” or “amended” as used in Section 1 shall mean any proposal to amend the text or maps of the Progress Guide and General Plan affecting the future urbanizing designation as the same existed in the Progress Guide and General Plan on August 1, 1984 or the land subject to said designation on August 1, 1984, except amendments which are neutral or make the designation more restrictive in terms of permitting development.”

Section 3. Implementation. “The City Council, city Planning Commission, and City staff are hereby directed to take any and all actions necessary under this initiative measure, including but not limited to adoption and implementation on any amendments to the General Plan and zoning ordinance or citywide, reasonably necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this initiative measure. Said actions shall be carried forthwith.”

Section 4. Guidelines. “The City Council may adopt reasonable guidelines to implement this initiative measure following notice and public hearing, provided that any such guidelines shall be consistent with the intent and purpose of this measure.”





Section 5. Exemptions for Certain Projects. “This measure shall not prevent completion of any project as to which a building permit has been issued pursuant to Section 91.04.03(a) of the San Diego Municipal Code prior to the effective date of this measure; provided, however, that the project shall cease to be exempt from the provisions of Section 91.02.0303(d) of the San Diego Municipal Code or if the said permit is suspended or revoked pursuant to Section 91.02.0303(e) of the San Diego Municipal Code.”

Section 6. Amendment of Repeal. “This measure may be amended or repealed only by a majority of the voters voting at an election thereon.”

Section 7. Severability. “If any section, subsection, sentence, phrase, clause, or portion of this initiative is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this initiative and each section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, part or portion thereof would have been adopted or passed irrespective of the fact that any one or more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, phrases, parts of portions be declared invalid or unconstitutional.”

### **Proposition A Lands**

By 2005, phase shifts, per Proposition A and the Guidelines for Future Development, have occurred for the land determined to be appropriate for more urban levels of development within the planning horizon of this General Plan. The city also completed planning efforts to address land use in the remainder of the Future Urbanizing Area subject to its jurisdiction. The City Council adopted a comprehensive update to the San Pasqual Valley Plan that requires the preservation of the San Pasqual Valley for agricultural use, open space, and Multiple Habitat Preservation Area (MHPA - see Conservation Element for more detail). Additionally, the city adopted a specific plan for the Del Mar Mesa that severely limits residential development to rural densities and sets aside over half of the plan area as MHPA. Furthermore, federal, state, county and other jurisdictions have participated with the city in planning for open space and habitat preservation in the San Dieguito and Tijuana River Valleys.

Proposition A lands also include military and other lands not subject to the city’s jurisdiction. In the past, the City Council has chosen to follow the development intensity restrictions and the requirement for a vote of the people to approve an amendment to shift the area from Future to Planned Urbanizing Area as specified in Proposition A, upon receipt of jurisdiction over former military installations.

**Figure LU-4**

**Proposition A Lands  
Legend**

- URBANIZED
- PROPOSITION 'A' LANDS

0 1 2 4 6 Miles



Pacific Ocean

San Diego Bay

MEXICO

- 1 Balboa Park
- 2 Barrio Logan
- 3 Black Mountain Ranch
- 4 Carmel Mountain Ranch
- 5 Carmel Valley
- 6 Centre City
- 7 City Heights\*
- 8 Clairemont Mesa
- 9 College Area
- 10 Del Mar Mesa
- 11 East Elliott
- 12 Eastern Area\*
- 13 Encanto Neighborhoods\*\*
- 14 Fairbanks Country Club
- 15 Future Urbanizing Area Subarea 2
- 16 Greater Golden Hill
- 17 Greater North Park
- 18 Kearny Mesa
- 19 Kensington-Talmadge\*
- 20 La Jolla
- 21 Linda Vista
- 22 Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve
- 23 Midway-Pacific Highway
- 24 Mira Mesa
- 25 Miramar Ranch North
- 26 Mission Bay Park
- 27 Mission Beach
- 28 Mission Valley
- 29 Navajo
- 30 Normal Heights\*
- 31 Ocean Beach
- 32 Old San Diego
- 33 Otay Mesa
- 34 Otay Mesa-Nestor
- 35 Pacific Beach
- 36 Pacific Highlands Ranch
- 37 Peninsula
- 38 Rancho Bernardo
- 39 Rancho Encantada
- 40 Rancho Penasquitos
- 41 Sabre Springs
- 42 San Pasqual
- 43 San Ysidro
- 44 Scripps Miramar Ranch
- 45 Serra Mesa
- 46 Skyline-Paradise Hills
- 47 Torrey Hills
- 48 Southeastern San Diego\*\*
- 49 Tierrasanta
- 50 Tijuana River Valley
- 51 Torrey Highlands
- 52 Torrey Pines
- 53 University
- 54 Uptown
- 55 Via De La Valle

\* Mid-City Community Plan

\*\* Southeastern San Diego Community Plan



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## Tiers

As described, the phased development areas system has, for the most part, expired. The city has grown into a jurisdiction with primarily two tiers, see Figure LU-4 Proposition A Lands Map:

- Proposition A Lands – (as previously defined) characterized by very low-density, residential, open space, natural resource-based park, and agricultural uses; and
- Urbanized Lands – characterized by older, recently developed, and developing communities at urban and suburban levels of density and intensity;

As of 2005, communities formerly known as planned urbanizing were largely completed according to the adopted community plan, and of that group, the oldest were beginning to experience limited redevelopment on smaller sites.

One of the primary purposes behind the adoption of the Phased Development areas system was to ensure the timely provision of public facilities as growth occurred. In the Planned Urbanizing Area, the city developed the Facilities Benefit Assessment (FBA) and other financing programs to accomplish this requirement. Funds collected through these particular mechanisms, however, can only be used for capital expenditures. Once a public facility is constructed, the city must turn to other funding sources for operation and maintenance, primarily the general fund and maintenance assessment districts. The public facility phasing and sequencing components of the tier system, therefore, will no longer be relevant when the city reaches build-out according to community plans.

Phasing growth in established, urbanized neighborhoods is problematic, especially when communities are already deficient in public facilities and services. Strict adherence to a phasing program with unit caps and facility thresholds could result in precluding growth, even if consistent with the community plan and desired by the community for the purposes of revitalization and meeting other community goals.

## Evaluating New Growth

Each community must have the opportunity to establish, through their adopted community plan, a specific framework to address the shortfall in public facilities and services. This will involve the preparation of a community specific public facilities prioritization schedule (see Public Facilities, Services, and Safety Element for policies regarding prioritization). Additionally, each new development proposal must be carefully evaluated to determine both its benefit to and impact upon the community to ensure that it contributes to public facilities commensurate with the level of impact.



## Policies

### SF-G.1. Proposition 'A' lands.

- a. As a result of these planning efforts, the city, with voter concurrence, has effectively determined where development can and cannot occur with respect to lands identified as the Future Urbanizing area
- b. Non phase shifted lands shall be identified as Proposition A Lands and no longer be referred to as the Future Urbanizing area;
- c. If and when additional military lands and other areas become subject to the city's jurisdiction, planning for reuse shall follow a public planning and voter approval process consistent with the provisions of this Element of the General Plan.

### SF-G.2. Evaluating new growth.

The following factors will be used for evaluation of individual development proposals within the urbanized area to determine if the proposals will or will not adversely affect the General Plan in that they do not compound existing deficiencies:

- The ability of the water supply and distribution system to provide for the needs generated by the proposed development
- The application of water quality protection measures to minimize disruption of natural water flows and contaminated storm water runoff
- The ability of the wastewater system to collect, treat, and dispose of the wastes generated by the proposed development
- The ability of the fire department to provide fire protection according to the established response times as stated in this General Plan
- The ability of the appropriate neighborhood school to absorb the children expected to reside in the proposed development
- The ability of parks and open spaces to provide for the active and passive recreational needs of the residents of the proposed development
- The ability of the library system to provide library services to the residents of the proposed development
- The employment of superior site design techniques and land use arrangement to enhance transit accessibility and walkability, integrate civic spaces, promote cultural resources, and safety and security
- Ability of the planned street and transit system to allow traffic to operate at acceptable levels based upon project design and street improvements
- The extent to which the proposed development implements General Plan goals





## J. Conclusion - Beyond 2020

### Discussion

The City of Villages concept and accompanying growth strategies embodied in the Land Use Element are intended to guide future development in San Diego well beyond the year 2020. This is a long-range proposal that will not be fully implemented in many parts of the city until after 2020. Some of the urban nodes contemplated as future villages are currently experiencing demand for intensified use and have infrastructure in place. These nodes could develop in accordance with the City of Villages strategy in the next few years while other areas will not achieve urban village characteristics until much later.

### Village Evolution

Over the next few years, the greatest share of redevelopment and village development will initially occur in the older developed central communities. However, it is anticipated that there will be a gradual shift to newer suburban areas as communities developed after World War II begin to age and experience redevelopment pressure. After 2020, it is anticipated that a significant share of redevelopment and village development will occur in the northern portion of the city, particularly in those areas that experienced initial development after 1970.

Some of the most significant potential urban village locations that may become available in the long term are on sites that are now used for military and airport uses and are not currently planned for urban development. These sites could include San Diego International Airport, Brown Field, Montgomery Field, the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, and portions of Marine Corps Air Station Miramar. Lindbergh Field, for example, has been suggested as a site that could, if the airport is relocated, support a variety of uses that could take full advantage of bay views and proximity to downtown. Redevelopment of these airport and military sites is currently uncertain and would likely occur after 2020.

An even more important trend anticipated after 2020 than the establishment of new urban villages will be the continued evolution of existing villages. In the dynamic process of urban development, some villages, including the pilot projects, will begin to form during the next decade, combining residential and retail uses. Within several years, these villages may add local office uses such as doctors and dentists offices. Still later they may include larger scale employment components. A common feature of all the villages will be ease of walking between residential units, transit stops, public facilities, and basic commercial uses. However, as the villages become more fully developed, their individual personalities will become more defined and their development patterns will become more varied and distinctive.

It is anticipated that the functions of most individual villages will develop in a gradual, organic manner rather than be quickly established through the construction



of a few large projects. After 2020, some of the villages may take on specialized functions that cannot be predicted at the present time. For example, some villages could eventually contain regional entertainment centers while other villages gain renown as specialized shopping districts. Still other areas will have a wide mix of uses with no particular emphasis.

### **The Rate of Village Development**

Infrastructure that is currently lacking must be in place before some of the areas identified as potential villages can begin to accept higher density residential development and/or additional commercial uses. Transit is currently inadequate in many of the areas that have been considered as potential village locations. While some of the older communities in the city are already ripe for redevelopment, and intensification could enhance their existing village characteristics within ten to fifteen years, other potential urban village locations are characterized by relatively new shopping centers and housing that will not be ready for redevelopment for fifteen to twenty years or more.

The rate at which the City of Villages concept can be applied throughout the city will be determined largely by the rate at which infrastructure deficiencies can be remedied. Transit will be particularly crucial. As SANDAG's Transit First vision is implemented, many potential village locations could begin to develop in accordance with the City of Villages concept. The rate of implementation is dependent upon available funding, public support, and political will. However, even if transit deficiencies and other infrastructure needs are fully addressed in the next two decades, it is likely that the transition from the current auto-oriented pattern of development to a more transit and pedestrian-oriented development pattern will take up to forty years to be fully achieved. The current automobile-dominated urban development pattern in San Diego has occurred over several decades and the incremental land use and transportation changes sought will likely take almost as long to realize.

Finally, a significant factor that will influence the pace at which the City of Villages strategy will be implemented is the rate of future population growth in the San Diego region. The pattern of development envisioned in the City of Villages concept will not be impacted by the rate of growth, but the rate of development of individual villages will be dependent in part on the region's population growth rate.

### **Lifestyle Trends**

Certain demographic trends that are already evident in San Diego will be more fully developed by the year 2020 and thereafter. These trends include a steadily increasing elderly proportion of the population and fewer people living in detached single-family units. Many elderly people are unable or choose not to drive. The creation of a more pedestrian and transit-oriented urban pattern around village nodes will provide more options to this population group than the auto-oriented pattern of development that has been prevalent in the recent past. Under the City of Villages strategy, more seniors may not need housing developed that specifically serves se-



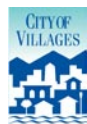


nior citizens, instead choosing mixed-use, mixed-income neighborhoods that are accessible by transit or walking to a full-range of services and facilities.

Another trend that is currently in a beginning stage in San Diego, but that will be far more evident in the future, is the desire by an increasing segment of the population to live in an urban, rather than a suburban, setting. By 2030, San Diego will offer a broader choice of residential lifestyles resembling more mature cities such as Chicago and San Francisco. This will be the case in part because the chief advantage of suburbia in the postwar era – a home surrounded by a large yard – has already become unattainable for most San Diego residents because of the high cost and scarcity of land.

Many of the trends that will impact development and planning in the years after 2020 cannot be accurately predicted at the present time. The degree to which shortages of water and energy may impact future growth patterns is unknown. Federal funding levels for regional public facilities cannot be projected. It is already apparent that a shortage of buildable land combined with continued desirability of living in San Diego will result in a continued lack of affordable housing and high rents for office and retail space. The traditional low density pattern of development characterized by single-family subdivisions, auto-oriented retail centers and campus-type business parks will not meet the needs of this city and region in the years after 2020.

The Strategic Framework and Land Use Element is intended to provide a positive response to growth and development trends by providing an enlightened strategy for the future development of the city – a strategy that builds upon what is good in our communities and ensures a high quality of life for future generations.



**The City of San Diego General Plan**  
*Strategic Framework/Land Use Element*